



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

February 26, 2018

President Donald J. Trump  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Northwest  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write to express concern that, over a year into your administration, you have failed to put forth a nominee to fulfil the role of Director of the Office on Violence Against Women (OVW). While we understand that a record number of high-ranking positions remain vacant across the federal government, we are particularly troubled by this vacancy given the importance of the office and the need for the federal government to show leadership amongst increasing, serious reports of sexual assault and violence perpetrated against women. Moreover, an acting director is not empowered to completely carry out the duties of his or her nominated and appointed counterpart. This creates uncertainty and makes it all but impossible for these offices to plan ahead or respond to current needs.

The Office on Violence Against Women within the Department of Justice is tasked with leading the federal government in developing the national capacity to reduce violence against women and administer justice for and strengthen services to victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. The OVW was created in 1995 under the auspices of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), in the hopes of creating a national, unified, and coordinated response to the atrocities of sexual assault, domestic violence, and stalking. OVW also administers grants to local, state, and tribal governments, courts, community and non-profit organizations, secondary schools, and coalitions. These grants work to support victims and hold perpetrators accountable through promoting a coordinated community response. Since 1995, the office has awarded more than six billion dollars in grants and cooperative agreements, and has launched a multifaceted approach to implementing VAWA.

In light of all of the great work the OVW carries out in support of women, and given the seriousness of allegations and admissions of sexual assault among public figures recently, including members of our own government and your administration, it is even more concerning that this position remains unfilled today. We urge you to expeditiously nominate a qualified Director of the Office on Violence Against Women so that the Senate may begin its consideration of such a nominee. Each day that this position remains unfilled serves as a symbol that our federal government does not take these issues seriously. We hope you bear this in mind and advance this nomination without further delay.

Sincerely,

Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress

Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress

*Nanette Diaz Barragán*

Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress

*Yvette D. Clarke*

Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress

*James P. McGovern*

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress

*Beto O'Rourke*

Beto O'Rourke  
Member of Congress

*Nydia Velázquez*

Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress

*Donald S. Beyer, Jr.*

Donald S. Beyer, Jr.  
Member of Congress

*Michael E. Capuano*

Michael Capuano  
Member of Congress

*Steve Cohen*

Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress

*Adriano Espaillat*

Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress

*David N. Cicilline*

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Member of Congress

*Stephen F. Lynch*

Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress

*Gwen S. Moore*

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Member of Congress

*Jamie Raskin*

Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress

*John Yarmuth*

John Yarmuth  
Member of Congress

*Debbie Wasserman Schultz*

Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress

*Carol Shea-Porter*

Carol Shea-Porter  
Member of Congress

*Jim Costa*

Jim Costa  
Member of Congress

*Alcee L. Hastings*

Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress